

THE CHURCH IN GUELPH

The Church has indeed shared in the general progress which has marked Ontario in these recent years of prosperity, and its growth in institutions, activity and zeal has been marked in many a place where no reports have reached the outside public. We read little of Catholic news from Guelph, but the amount of Church gossip picked up by the Register man this week shows the Royal City in a most favorable light from a Catholic point of view. The magnificent church which Guelphites proudly claim to be the finest specimen of Gothic architecture in Ontario, still lacks its towers and spires, but quickly and steadily the debt has been reduced until now the general expectation is that building will soon commence on the lofty spires planned to rise 250 feet above the summit of the lofty Catholic Hill, the site given by John Galt to Bishop Macdonell in the early 'thirties, when the pioneer prelate visited his friend in the baby settlement. John Galt planned for a great city and signaled the visit of his old friend and fellow countryman Bishop Macdonell by picking a site for a future Cathedral and setting a gang of woodsmen to work to cut out an avenue to the top of the hill, where a lofty elm was left to mark the spot, where, in later years, were to rise towers to raise men's minds to God. The street was appropriately named Macdonell street. Some one may write the history of this parish, picturesque in its founding, romantic in the story of the great foundations for the church started but never finished, whose dimensions were to be the largest in America, and whose stones are incorporated in the present magnificent edifice, heroic in the sturdy fights of its people in the early days of partisan bigotry, when the very Church was guarded by armed men, yet was burned by an enemy, a history enriched by names of great men of the Jesuit Order who have at various times made their homes in Guelph, and a history like that of most Catholic parishes of hard-working fathers fighting the battle of the farm, subduing nature and leaving behind a people who have made their mark in the community.

At present Guelph is looking forward and has little time for history. Last summer saw the removal from the midst of their orator, Father Kenny, S.J., who has returned to the Gesù at Montreal, being replaced as parish priest by Father Connolly, S.J., of repute as a mission Father and the editor of the Sacred Heart Messenger, the organ of the League of the Sacred Heart which, by the way, is very strong and active in Guelph, the first Friday communions being a sight long to be remembered by the outsider visiting the parish. Father O'Loane, a native Guelphite, was also removed to Sault Ste. Marie to be replaced by Father John Coffey, S.J., who was a practising lawyer in Guelph when he decided to enter the Jesuit Order, and who had served as a city father along with his father, Denis Coffey, and his brother, T. P. Coffey, whose death was so recently deplored. Father Donovan, S.J., alone remained, and Father Doherty, S.J., a noted preacher and the builder of the front part of the church, was also again placed in the parish. The arrival of the new fathers was signified by much activity in church circles. Two large missions have been held, a Ladies' Sodality has been organized and Father Coffey has just organized a Catholic Men's Club with a couple of hundred members, who are fitting up quarters in the centre of the city for a temporary home, and are planning for a permanent home. This month will see a four days' entertainment in the large basement, the evening's programme being looked after by various societies in turn. The League of the Cross, a temperance society, has been in vigorous existence for many years. The St. Vincent de Paul Society and a Ladies' Sewing Society have been always most active in looking after the Catholic poor. The C.M.B.A. has a large branch and is reaching out for more members. The national society for the Irish St. Patrick's Society is not a Catholic one as for many years Catholic and Protestant have alternated as President.

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Dr. James Mills, the Dominion Railway Commissioner, having been one of its Protestant Presidents, and J. P. Downey, M.P.P., editor of the Herald, one of the Catholics who held that office. Ald. Thorpe, an Anglican of American birth, Dr. Numan, an ardent home ruler, R. L. Torrance, son of Dr. Torrance, moderator of the Presbyterian Church, and Mr. James E. Day, now of Toronto, are some of those who have filled the chair.

While Guelph boasts a beautiful public library building, no small part of the credit of which is due to the Catholic members of the board, Mr. J. E. Day, the former secretary, and Dr. Coghlan (the president of the Catholic Club), the new pastor recognizes the need of a safe Catholic library and one is now being formed. Guelph Separate Schools hold a high position. The buildings are good and are on the church square. The schools are under the charge of the Sisters of Loretto, who also have a successful convent, and who have made a very creditable record in the standing of their pupils in the entrance examinations. The parish priest is superintendent of the schools and Mr. Wm. Carroll, Catholic representative on the Board of Education, is recognized as a valued member of that board.

St. Joseph's Hospital and the House of Providence for aged persons, have a provincial reputation. The Sisters of St. Joseph are in charge. His Lordship Bishop Dowling is now enjoying convalescence at St. Joseph's after a very severe illness. The hospital is always crowded. A training school for nurses has been established and a new building, St. Roch's Hospital for Infectious Cases only, has just been opened, having been built by the generosity of some Catholic gentlemen. Guelph is noted for its Ladies' Day, each August, when for one day the city streets are turned over to the ladies of the parish, who bring the passengers to the campus of the Agricultural College, where a picnic is held. The cars are manned (or womaned) for the day by ladies, and as all receipts go to St. Joseph's Hospital, passengers that day rarely expect any change back.

The feeling in the community is most harmonious. The feuds of bygone days have in great part vanished, his religion being no bar, even to the success of Mr. J. P. Downey, whose Celtic eloquence is a source of pride and hope to all Guelph of both sides of politics. Two of the aldermen, Alds. Higgins and Cray, are Catholics, many of the prominent merchants follow the old faith, but a peculiar thing to the outsider is the number of Irish names on the main streets who are of other churches.

Altogether the Catholic visitor in Guelph receives in the thriving city a most favorable impression of the Church's position, for the magnificent church, splendid hospital, schools and convent, energetic societies, are but what would be expected from the sturdy self-reliant, self-respecting and obedient Catholic congregation

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Bona Mors or Good Death
Society

The work of the Bona Mors or Good Death Society is the General Intention of the League for November. This confraternity was established more than 250 years ago in the Church of the Gesù in Rome, by Father Vincent Caraffa, seventh General of the Society of Jesus, and is enriched with many indulgences. Its particular object is to help its members, and those for whom their prayers are offered, to make fit preparation for death. To the votaries of the world and its transient pleasures the thought of death is obnoxious and terrifying. "Let us enjoy life while we may," they say. But for them and for us the dread hour of departure is swiftly approaching, and it is wise to defer preparation for it until, perhaps, too late? The wise man says: "Think of thy last end, and thou shalt never sin." It is for this salutary object that the Bona Mors is established, in order that by daily meditation and prayer we may grow familiar with the thought of death, that we may "walk circumspectly," and may learn how when our time

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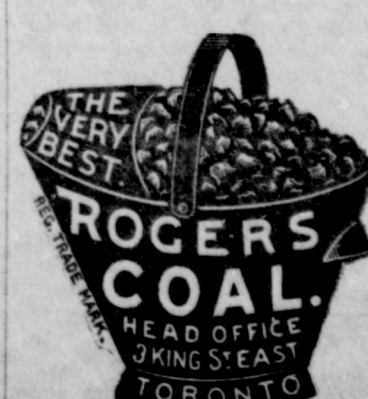
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